

District 25 News

MAKIKI, TANTALUS, MCCULLY, PAPA KOLEA

APRIL 2009

The Shortlist

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2009

Car Wash to Benefit Makiki Community Learning Center,
The Parish of St. Clement
@ 9:00am-2:00pm

Need your car washed? Support a good cause...the MCLC and the operation of the Makiki Library! Join Friends of the MCLC at St. Clement's church to get your car washed.

Questions? Contact Friends of the MCLC at 522-7076.

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2009

MCLC & Hui o Makiki Legislative "Coffee Talk,"
Makiki Library @ 6:00-8:00pm

The second in this year's series of legislative coffee talks at MCLC's Frank F. Fasi Citizen Resource Center will feature area legislators and a wrap-up of the 2009 legislative session.

Please contact Rep. Belatti's office at 586-9425, if you have questions about the 2009 Legislative "Coffee Talks."

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2009

Aloha Aina Recycling Event,
Stevenson Middle School
@ 8:00am-2:00pm

Reduce, reuse, & recycle. In collaboration with recycling business, elected leaders, and the community, drop off your old appliances, car batteries, tires, cooking oil, old clothes, computers (1 per household), newspapers & telephone books, and so much more.

For curbside pick-up or if you have any questions, call Rep. Belatti's office at 586-9425.



Dear Neighbors!

I've often heard that "laughter is the best medicine," but with the difficult decisions facing the Legislature this session, there's seldom very much to smile about here at the capitol. We still occasionally find opportunities for much-needed humor and levity, however, such as when legislators honored Makiki resident and local legend of comedy Frank De Lima last month.

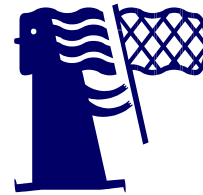
If you grew up in Hawaii sometime in the last two decades, it's likely that you remember Frank spending an hour at your school, infusing his message that students should "be safe, be responsible, and be respectful" with his own unique brand of comedy and fun. You might be surprised to know that Frank has been making these inspiring and entertaining presentations to thousands of students at hundreds of schools statewide every year since 1985. The Legislature honored him on March 30th for this extraordinary commitment to the betterment of youth in our state during a House floor presentation.

Frank's visit to the capitol reminds me about the power of community and the importance of the individuals who work to improve it, and gives me reason to hope even in the face of very tough times. This newsletter focuses on another example in which individuals can help make their community a better place, by taking action during "Feeding Hawaii's Hungry" month this April. I hope you will take the time to read of the many initiatives to fight hunger in our community and join me to assist our neighbors in need.

With warmest aloha,

Della Au Belatti
State Representative, District 25

Spending Medicaid funding wisely to protect Hawaii's social safety net



By DELLA AU BELATTI

In these difficult economic times, it is important to protect and strengthen Hawaii's health and social services safety net. President Barack Obama's recent stimulus plan, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), includes \$787 billion in tax cuts and spending for the states to assist them during this economic crisis. \$87 billion of that money will go toward state Medicaid assistance, one of the key threads in the state's safety net.

Medicaid covers the costs of essential medical services for our families in need. Unfortunately, the number of families in need is likely to increase in the near future, as our neighbors see their salaries reduced, hours cut, or their jobs eliminated entirely. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation analysis, for every 1% increase in unemployment, Medicaid rolls increase by 1 million people. It is especially necessary during times like these, with increased needs, that Medicaid funding be maintained, to ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors stay healthy as we all weather this economic storm.

In Hawaii, as with the rest of the states, Medicaid is funded jointly

by the federal and state governments. Each year the federal government reimburses Hawaii for Medicaid service expenditures each year. This reimbursement is based on the "Federal Medical Assistance Program" or

the "FMAP" rate. Each state is reimbursed at a minimum rate of 50% of its Medicaid costs. A state's FMAP rate may increase, however, if its per capita income decreases. Hawaii's FMAP has hovered around 56-58% in the past few years.

Under President Obama's stimulus plan, every state's FMAP will temporarily increase by 6.2% over the next twenty-seven months. In addition, states with high unemployment rates, like Hawaii, will receive an additional FMAP increase. According to Senator Daniel Inouye, the FMAP in-

Why are FMAP funds used for Medicaid spending is important?

- For every 1% increase in national unemployment, Medicaid rolls increase by 1 million people. (Kaiser Family Foundation)
- During the 2003 downturn, each \$1 million investment in Medicaid at the state level, with the 2.95 FMAP match, an average of \$3.85 million in business activity was generated in 2004.

Continued on page 3

What is the “social safety net?”

The safety net consists of health, human services, education, and housing programs that assist our most vulnerable populations: children, the elderly, disabled, mentally ill, poor, and victims of abuse and domestic violence. Government agencies and non-profit organizations that often receive government grants provide safety net services.

At the federal level, the safety net consists of important programs like Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps),

welfare, unemployment insurance, childcare subsidies, home energy assistance, and community service grants.

At the state level, the safety net consists of programs like state general assistance coverage, the Healthy Start Program, low-income dental coverage, caregiver respite services, Ke Ola Pono (Native Hawaiian health care services), the Chronic Diseases Self-Management Program, Kupuna Care, Kapahulu

and Moiliili Senior Centers, Waikiki Community Center, the Developmental Disabilities Medicaid Waiver Program, mental health services, the Partnerships in Community Living Program, direct health care to the uninsured, substance abuse treatment, and the Healthy Aging Partnership Program. Organizations like Child and Family Services, Catholic Charities Hawaii, and Habitat for Humanity are among the many that provide safety net services.

Spending Medicaid funding *continued from page 2*

crease translates to an additional \$3.6 billion in federal Medicaid funding for Hawaii over the next two years.

This is good news for Hawaii. Medicaid expenditures not only keep our low-income families healthy, but they also stimulate the economy. Each dollar spent on Medicaid generates additional business activity in our state's health care sector. A 2004 Families USA report estimated that even a \$1 million increase in state Medicaid funding, coupled with a 2.95 increase in the FMAP rate would generate nearly \$4 million in business activity. Medicaid reimbursements are essential to retaining the state's doctors, paying vendors for medical goods and services, and keeping our health care workers employed.

In mid-March 2009 and after the House of Representatives crafted the state budget, Governor Linda Lingle stated her intention to use the FMAP monies and other stimulus funds towards balancing the state's budget generally and without laying off state employees or raising taxes. Balancing the state's budget entirely through the use of federal stimulus funds is difficult because the ARRA expressly provides that monies that states receive in the form of FMAP increases shall be used “to protect and maintain State Medicaid programs during a period of economic downturn, including by helping to avert cuts to provider payment rates and benefits or services.” The ARRA also states that any increased FMAP funds shall not go towards the state's rainy day fund.

Recently, on April 9, 2009, the Senate issued its draft of the budget, working off of the proposed House Draft 1 of House Bill 200 and moving closer towards realizing the goal of using FMAP monies for their intended purposes. In its proposal, the Senate used the enhanced FMAP funds made available through the stimulus package and restored funding to Adult Dental Services for

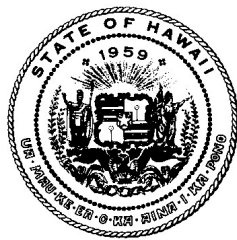
Medicaid eligible adults. This amounts to a restoration of \$2.6 million for fiscal year 2010 and \$3.1 million for fiscal year 2011.

The Senate also used the enhanced FMAP rate to provide the same level of support for Medicaid eligible services. Instead of a \$182 million reduction in general funds as proposed by the Governor, the Senate reduced just \$154 million in general funds to assist with the budget shortfall. The Senate maintained the following general funds appropriations for safety net services:

- MedQuest Program:
\$433 million & \$541 million (FYs 2010 & 2011)
- Cash Support for Families-Self-Sufficiency:
\$25.5 million (FYs 2010 & 2011)
- Case Management for Self-Sufficiency:
\$15 million (FYs 2010 & 2011)
- Cash Support for Child Care:
\$19 million (FYs 2010 & 2011)

All of these general fund appropriations help to maintain and “draw down” the state's claims to an annual federal TANF block grant.

The federal government's FMAP increase promises to deliver to all of the people in Hawaii, low-income or not, a much needed economic shot in the arm. The benefits could be even greater if the State of Hawaii makes its own commitment to maintaining or increasing its own level of Medicaid funding. We are all in this economic downturn together, and it is important to recognize that safety net spending has the potential to support not just low-income people, but other critically needed and struggling segments of our economy as well.



≡ Commemorating 50 Years of Statehood ≡

By MATT WINFREE



On March 13, 2009, the State Legislature met in joint session to commemorate the 50th anniversary of President Eisenhower's signing of the Admission Act of 1959, which brought Hawaii into the Union as the 50th of the United States of America.

As two F-15 fighters flew overhead and the gathered assembly was treated to high-caliber vocal performances by Danny Kaleikini, Danny Couch, and middle school student Arshiel Calatrava, Governor Linda Lingle, Senate President Colleen Hanabusa, and Speaker of the House Calvin Say each made remarks concerning the state's milestone birthday.



While Hawaii's road to statehood is still a matter of great contention to many, the Legislature focused on the state's many positive achievements during the celebration, recognizing special guests like former Governors George Ariyoshi, John Waihee,

and Ben Cayetano, and members of the precocious first class of Hawaii's State Legislature, which included former Lieutenant Governor and US Representative Tom Gill.

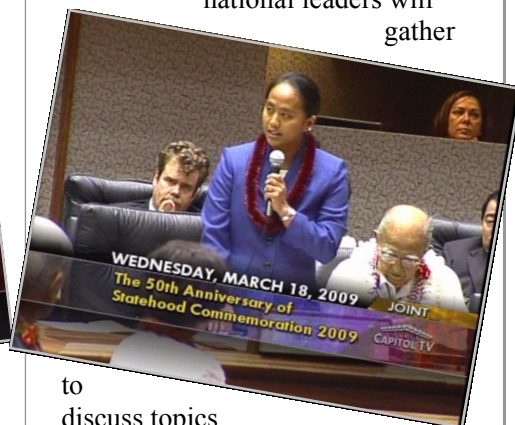
Representative Belatti was honored with the duty of introducing Mr. Gill, whose achievements on both the state and federal political landscape are numerous (her remarks are reprinted in the adjoining article). Mr. Gill, a lifelong resident of Round Top, was a proponent of legislation that promoted environmental preservation, equality for all, and progressive economic policy, with his pivotal role in the passage of the historic Civil Rights Bill in 1964 standing as one of his foremost political achievements.



The joint session was one of many commemorative events celebrating the anniversary of statehood. For the last several months, the governor's office and Wai'anae High School's Searider Productions have produced a series of radio and television vignettes entitled

"50 *Voices of Statehood*," which feature diverse perspectives on statehood from 50 residents from across the island chain and air on six television stations and 60 radio stations. The series will run through August of this year. Additionally, a "Walking Tour of Fifty Years" is currently available, during which participants are led through many of the famous places that have served as the backdrop for Hawaii's dynamic history.

These and the many other events surrounding the 50th anniversary will culminate with a one-day public conference on August 21, 2009 called "Commemorating the 50th State: New Horizons for the Next 50 Years." Local, national and international leaders will gather



to discuss topics about Hawai'i's past, present and future, including technology in our daily lives, education for the next generation, the 21st century economy, and a break-out session entitled "Native Hawaiians: Cultural Navigation in a Sea of Change."

“I am privileged to stand before you today to recognize a man whose life is intertwined with the life of our state from its very inception—a son of Makiki whose penchant for sticking to his convictions with unflinching dedication has brought him to great heights as a leader of our state and our nation. That man is Thomas Ponce Gill.

Remarks by REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI made during the special Joint Session of the Hawaii State Legislature at the State Capitol House Chambers on March 18, 2009.

Following the career path of an individual like Mr. Gill is quite the roller-coaster ride, because he is one of those rare public figures who pursued his political ideals without exception, leading to his fair share of considerable triumph and tribulation. Mr. Gill made a name for himself in early on for his ability to argue intelligently and for his mastery of the timely phrase or sharp quip, whose sting I believe has been felt by some leaders in this room.

This sharp wit, coupled with a strength of character and the courage of his convictions, propelled Mr. Gill to positions in Hawaii's territorial government, then into the position of House majority floor leader of Hawaii's first state Legislature, and next to Hawaii's last at-large seat in the United States House of Representatives.

During his single term in Congress, Mr. Gill was appointed as the floor

manager for the famed Civil Rights Bill. It was his task to move this bill through the House, as well as to write the opening section of Title Six. The act passed in 1964 due in no small part to the efforts of Congressman Gill, marking one of the greatest milestones toward equal rights in our nation's history.

Not one to shy away from unpopular ideas or from a political fight, Mr. Gill continued in his quest for equality, his dedication to protecting Hawaii's natural environment, and his commitment to civil rights for all through victory and defeat, losing a bid for the US Senate, winning the Lieutenant Governorship, and then

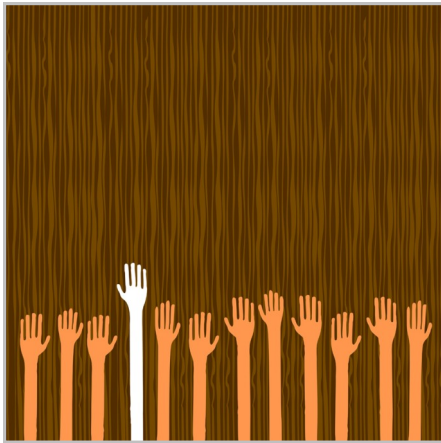
narrowly losing to Governor Burns in the 1970 democratic primary. Through the highs and the lows, Mr. Gill never compromised his integrity, and with the help of his lovely wife, Lois, has instilled his deep sense of civic responsibility and leadership in his

children, several of whom, including Eric Gill who is here with us today, have become prominent public figures themselves.

And so it is with great respect and admiration that I now present to you



Continued on page 8



Starving for support

As unemployment rates climb and the recession deepens, local community food outreach services need your help more than ever

By MATT WINFREE

The more than 250 organizations statewide that collect and distribute food to Hawaii's hungry and economically-challenged stand as a great testament to the spirit of aloha inherent in our state. But there is an equally considerable testament—one that speaks to the severity of our state's economic hardships—inherent in the unprecedented and still-growing demand that these organizations are currently facing from hungry families.

"People are in need of our help now more than ever before," said Sheri Rolf, food drive chairperson for the Hawaii Foodbank, one of the state's largest non-profit organizations and the chief supplier of many of the organizations across the island chain responsible for providing needy families with food. The Foodbank has taken in 750,000 pounds of food so far this year to accommodate these rising needs—approximately double the amount of food collected in the same period last year.

Due to the skyrocketing demand on the Hawaii Foodbank and other charitable agencies across the state, Governor Linda Lingle and Lieutenant Governor James "Duke" Aiona have declared this April as "Feeding Hawaii's Hungry"

Month. "Helping to feed hungry families is part of good citizenship," Aiona said. "I take comfort in knowing that the people of Hawaii have always shown an incredible willingness to take responsibility not only for themselves, but for the well-being of others."



With so many of our neighbors in need, it's important to note the many opportunities throughout the state and in our Makiki community to get involved and make a difference in the war against hunger. The Hawaii Foodbank's website (www.hawaiifoodbank.org) provides a listing of various volunteer and donation locations across the state, as well as a means for fast, secure online monetary donations. There are also many local organizations close to home that have taken on the responsibility for distributing food to needy families.

Please take a moment and call the numbers below if you're interested in donating or receiving donations. No donation is too large or too small, and your donated goods will go directly to your neighbors in need.

Parish of St. Clement Food Outreach Ministry

Please see the adjoining article about this remarkable outreach program.

1515 Wilder Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96822
955-7745

Aloha Harvest

This organization provides free pickup of both perishable and non-perishable food from your home or business and free delivery to an array of community food distribution programs that need food now. Call today!

3599 Waiālae Ave, 3rd Floor
Honolulu, HI 96816
537-6945

Central Union Church

The church's city missionary provides valuable food, clothing, and services to the homeless who frequent the nearby neighborhood parks.

1660 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96826
941-0957

Manoa-Punahou Catholic Community, Sacred Heart Parish

This Catholic community organization provides a variety of meal and grocery services to those in need.

1701 Wilder Ave
Honolulu, HI 96822
973-2211

Spotlight on service

The Parish of St. Clement Food Outreach Ministry

On Easter weekend, caring Makiki residents gathered at Makiki

District Park to exchange donated canned goods and rice for the opportunity for their children to participate in a rollicking Easter egg hunt. While neighborhood keiki were busy scouring the lawn for candy and other goodies, event organizers managed to raise more than 300 cans of food and 50 pounds of rice for one of Makiki's foremost food initiatives: The Parish of St. Clement Food Outreach Ministry.

The Food Outreach Ministry has existed in Makiki for more than thirty years, providing grocery bags filled with canned meats, canned meals, canned soups, canned

fruits & vegetables, rice, crackers, and cookies to needy residents on the third Saturday of every month. In recent years, the Ministry has expanded its duties, providing hot lunches along with each bag of groceries distributed. As the economy has slowed, Parish Administrator Carolyn Koehler has seen a consistent and rapid rise in the community need for this free service.

"In February of 2007, we provided forty-seven bags of groceries to needy families. In 2008, that number increased to 71, and this past February, there were 118 families that received groceries from the Outreach Ministry," said Koehler.

With the increased strain on its services, the Parish's need for kind-hearted community members to come forward and donate is greater than ever. Donated food can be dropped off at the church office during regular business hours, and contributors are encouraged to call first to determine what goods the Food Outreach Ministry needs most. St. Clement is located at 1515 Wilder Avenue, and can be reached at 955-7745.



St. Clement's volunteers separate bags of rice, prepare hot lunches, and organize canned goods for distribution over a series of events for the Food Outreach Ministry. In addition to the much needed food donations, help is needed bagging and distributing the food every third Saturday of the month. Please call the number above for more information.

Call for submissions:

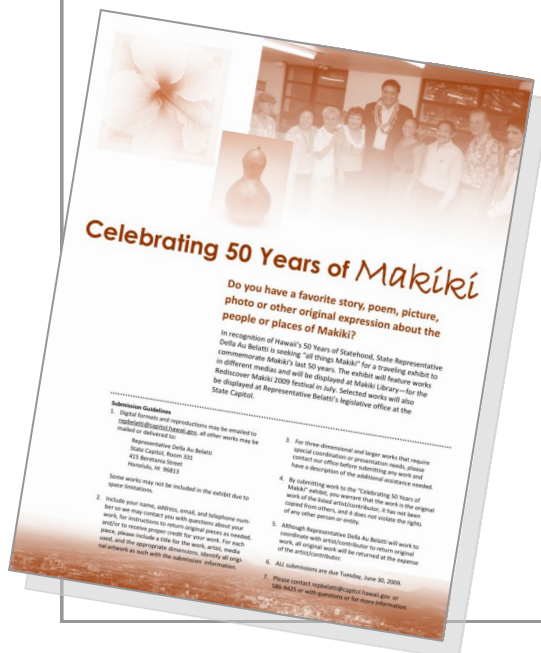
Do you have a favorite story, poem, picture, photo or other original expression about the people or places of Makiki?

In recognition of Hawaii's 50 Years of Statehood, State Representative Della Au Belatti is seeking "all things Makiki" for a traveling exhibit to commemorate *Makiki's* last 50 years.

The exhibit will feature works in different medias and will be displayed at Makiki Library—for the Rediscover Makiki 2009 festival in

July. Selected works will also be displayed at Representative Belatti's legislative office at the State Capitol.

For [more information and guidelines for your submission](http://makikitalks.ning.com), visit makikitalks.ning.com and visit the Town Hall page to download the flyer with complete instructions and contact information.



2009 Annual Aloha Aina Earth Day Urban Honolulu clean-up

Saturday, June 13, 2009
8:00 am to 2:00 pm

Are you looking for a convenient way to get rid of clutter in your home? Friends of the Makiki Community Learning Center will help you recycle items from your garage and closet, while raising money for Makiki Library. Please bring your items to the Stevenson Middle School student parking lot Saturday, June 13 between the hours of 8:00am—2:00pm.

Volunteers will accept the following items:

- Scrap metal, bicycles, appliances, pipes, beams (*no TVs/microwave ovens*)
- Newspaper, cardboard, magazines, and telephone books
- Beverage containers
- Cooking oil
- Printer cartridges
- Cellular phones
- One desk top computer per household/car (*no school/commercial computers; no curbside pick-up must drive in 1 computer per car*)
- Tires (*passenger tires, limit 4 per car*)
- Green waste



- Plastic bags, plastic hangers
- Athletic shoes (*no metal cleats*)
- Used eye glasses, hearing aids
- All kinds of batteries
- Usable clothing/household items
- Unwanted cars—FREE TOWING by appointment only.
- WILL NOT ACCEPT: paints, hazardous fluids, microwave ovens, TVs, gas tanks

For curbside pickup service or car tow service, you **MUST** call Representative Della Au Belatti's office at 586-9425.

Many thanks to our generous partners:

- Schnitzer Steel Hawaii
- Refrigerant Recycling
- Honolulu Recovery Systems
- Hawaiian Earth Products
- Goodwill Industries of Hawaii
- Unitek Solvent Services
- Interstate Battery
- Intrade Corp.
- T&N Computer Recycling Service
- Pacific Biodiesel
- Penske Truck Leasing
- Hawaii Lions Club
- Menhune Water Co.
- Hagadone Printing Co.
- Paradise Lua Inc.
- Walmart
- City & County of Honolulu
- State of Hawaii

Thomas Ponce Gill, Belatti remarks *continued from page 5*

a man who has been an integral part of Hawaii's political landscape since before our birth as a state; a man whose steadfast commitment to the advancement of human rights alone would justify his attendance here today, but whose impact on Hawaii and our nation has been so broad that it is fitting to introduce him not by the

many titles he has borne over a career that has spanned more than five decades, but by a few simple accolades; ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to introduce a beloved husband and father, a staunch advocate of social and economic justice, a TRUE CITIZEN of HAWAII, Mr. Thomas Ponce Gill."